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Regional WA under the microscope

Social and economic characteristics of regional Western Australia are highlighted in a special article in **Western Australian Statistical Indicators**, released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) today.

The article paints an economic and social picture of Local Government Areas (LGA) from the 2002 Western Australian Regional Profiles.

Highlights from the article include:

- The city of Perth had the fastest growing population in the state in 2000-01 (compared with 1999-2000), up by 9%. Perth is characterised by higher density residential living and a heavy concentration of families identified as DINKs (double income, no kids).
- The shire of Peppermint Grove had the highest median weekly household income (\$1,604) in 2001, more than double the state's median weekly household income, and the highest proportion of dwellings owned outright (57.6%). In addition, Peppermint Grove recorded the highest proportion of people using a computer at home (64.2%) and Internet usage (63.2) in 2001.
- Regional areas in the southwest had a high proportion of dwellings being purchased in 2001. This was particularly the case in the shires of Capel and Dardanup (39.7% and 36% respectively), where residential development is associated with Bunbury's urban spread. The shire of Capel also featured with the third highest regional population growth in 2000-01, up 6.2%.
- The shire of Roebourne, the centre for the offshore oil and gas fields of the northwest shelf and the onshore northwest shelf LNG plant, recorded \$8,855.5 million in minerals and petroleum production in 2001. Roebourne was the highest mineral and petroleum producing LGA in Western Australia, accounting for 86.9% of state petroleum production.
- The estimated commercial fishing catch from ocean and estuarine resources was valued at \$415.8 million in 2000-01, with western rock lobster fishery accounting for 72.1% of the state's fishing catch. Geraldton had the highest estimated value of fishing catch of \$73 million.

Most of the native hardwood forests are situated in the southwest of the state, with log production centred in the Manjimup, Donnybrook-Balingup and Nannup shires. In February 2001, the state government ended logging of all old-growth forests vested with the Conservation Commission of Western Australia. This resulted in a decline in the total contribution of these shires to total production (63.5% in 1998-99 to 52% in 2000-01). The shire of Manjimup recorded the largest decline, down 332,868 cubic metres (48.1%).

Further details are in **Western Australian Statistical Indicators, December Quarter 2002** (cat. no. 1367.5).

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